IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An information retrieval apparatus comprising:

a mapping processor operable to receive data representative of a map of information items from a set of information items identified in a search, the map providing the identified information items with respect to positions in an array in accordance with a mutual similarity of the information items, similar information items mapping to similar positions in the array, and to process the map data to form a hierarchical clustering of information items providing a first clustering level of information items and at least one other clustering level of information items for clusters of information items within the first level clusters,

a display processor operable in combination with a graphical user interface to display a representation of at least some of the positions of the array which correspond to identified information items as an n-dimensional display of display points within a display area of a graphical display,

wherein the display processor is operable to generate data representative of an indication which when displayed on the graphical user interface provides a user, when viewing a first cluster in one of the hierarchical levels of a relative direction within the n-dimensional space of the location of another cluster within the hierarchical level, and the graphical user interface is operable to display the indication of the relative direction of the other cluster within the display area of the graphical display, and the data representing the number of information items within the cluster is displayable with respect to the indication.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the information items include a plurality of ~~characterising~~ characterizing information features,

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the ~~characterising~~ characterizing information features of each information item being used to

form a feature vector for each information item, the feature vector being used to form the

map data by mapping the information item onto a position within the array.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in Claim 1. wherein the

mapping processor is operable to provide the first clustering level of information items with a

~~characterising~~ characterizing information feature associated with each of the first level

clusters of information items and to provide a ~~characterising~~ characterizing information

feature for the clusters of information items within the first level clusters at the other

hierarchical level.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the

~~characterising~~ characterizing information feature associated with each first level cluster and

the other ~~characterising~~ characterizing information feature associated with each cluster within

the other clustering level of information items are formed front a most common

~~characterising~~ characterizing information feature present in the information items associated

with each cluster.

Claim 5 (Original): An apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the clusters of

information items within one of the lower level clusters are associated with one another,

whereas the other clusters of the first level are additional clusters of information items with

respect to the information items within the lower level cluster.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in Claim 3, wherein the ~~characterising~~ <u>characterizing</u> information item associated with each cluster is the most common word of the textual information associated with each of the information items within each cluster.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the information items comprise textual information, the ~~characterising~~ <u>characterizing</u> information features being words, and the feature vector for an information item is representative of a set of frequencies of occurrence, within that information item, of each of a group of words.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in Claim 7, wherein the information items include textual information, the ~~characterising~~ <u>characterizing</u> information features being words, the positions within the array being mapped by mutual similarity of at least a part of the textual information.

Claim 9 (Original): An apparatus as claimed in Claim 7, wherein the information items are pre-processed for mapping by excluding words occurring within the textual information having more than a threshold frequency amongst the set of information items.

Claim 10 (Original): An apparatus as claimed in Claim 7, wherein the information items are pre-processed for mapping by excluding words occurring within the textual information having less than a threshold frequency amongst the set of information items.

Claim 11 (Canceled).

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in Claim [[11]] 1, wherein the display area includes at least two areas, one area providing an n-dimensional representation of the first hierarchical level of clusters and the other area providing an n-dimensional representation of the other hierarchical level of clusters, where n is an integer.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in Claim [[11]] 1, comprising

search processor for carrying out a word-related search of the information items;

the search processor and the graphical user interface being arranged to cooperate so that only those display points corresponding to identified information items are displayed.

Claim 14 (Canceled).

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in Claim [[14]] 1, wherein the display processor is operable to generate data representative of the number of information items within the other cluster, the number of information items being associated with the indication of the relative direction in the n-dimensional space of the other cluster with respect to the first cluster.

Claim 16 (Canceled).

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in Claim [[16]] 1, further comprising

a user control for selecting information items or clusters of information items within

the n-dimensional space using a user controlled pointer, wherein the number of information

items are display with respect to the indication of relative direction, in response to the pointer

being positioned over the indication.

Claim 18 (Original): An apparatus as claimed in Claim 12, wherein the number of

dimensions n is two.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): ~~Video~~ A video acquisition ~~and/or~~ and processing

apparatus comprising

an information retrieval apparatus ~~as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein~~ having

a mapping processor operable to receive data representative of a map of information items

from a set of information items identified in a search, the map providing the identified

information items with respect to positions in an array in accordance with a mutual similarity

of the information items, similar information items mapping to similar positions in the array,

and to process the map data to form a hierarchical clustering of information items providing a

first clustering level of information items and at least one other clustering level of

information items for clusters of information items within the first level clusters,

a display processor operable in combination with a graphical user interface to display

a representation of at least some of the positions of the array which correspond to identified

information items as an n-dimensional display of display points within a display area of a

graphical display, wherein the display processor is operable to generate data representative of

an indication which when displayed on the graphical user interface provides a user when

viewing a first cluster in one of the hierarchical levels of a relative direction within the

n-dimensional space of the location of another cluster within the hierarchical level, and the graphical user interface is operable to display the indication of the relative direction of the other cluster within the display area of the graphical display, and the data representing the number of information items within the cluster is displayable with respect to the indication, the information items ~~include~~ including video data with the textual information.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): ~~Video~~ The video acquisition ~~and/or~~ and processing apparatus as claimed in Claim 19, further comprising

a repository containing the information items, and

a data communications network for connecting the repository with the information retrieval apparatus.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): ~~Video~~ The video acquisition ~~and/or~~ and processing apparatus as claimed in Claim 19, wherein the information items include a representative key stamp providing a representative image from the information item.

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): ~~Video~~ The video acquisition ~~and/or~~ and processing apparatus as Claim 21, wherein the characterizing information feature associated with each first level cluster and the other characterizing information feature associated with each cluster within the other clustering level of information items are formed from a most common characterizing information feature present in the information items associated with each cluster and the common ~~characterising~~ characterizing information feature associated with a cluster includes a representative key stamp which is common to the cluster.

Claim 23 (Currently Amended): A method of retrieving and displaying information comprising

receiving data representative of a map of information items from a set of information items identified in a search, the map providing the identified information items with respect to positions in an array in accordance with a mutual similarity of the information items, similar information items mapping to similar positions in the array, and

processing the map data to form a hierarchical clustering of information items providing a first clustering level of information items and at least one other clustering level of information items for clusters of information items within the first level clusters,

displaying a representation of at least some of the positions of the array which correspond to identified information items as n-dimensional display array of display points within a display area of a graphical display wherein the displaying comprises

generating data representative of an indication which when displayed on the graphical user interface provides a user when viewing a first cluster in one of the hierarchical levels of a relative direction within the n-dimensional space of the location of another cluster within the hierarchical level, and

displaying the indication of the relative direction of the other cluster within the display area of the graphical display and the data representing the number of information items within the cluster is displayable with respect to the indication.

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The method as claimed in Claim 23, wherein [[the]] processing the map data includes:

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providing the first clustering level of information items with a ~~characterising~~ characterizing information feature associated with each of the first level clusters of information items and

providing a ~~characterising~~ characterizing information feature for the clusters of information items within the first level clusters at the other hierarchical level.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The method as claimed in Claim 24, wherein the information items include a plurality of ~~characterising~~ characterizing information features, the ~~characterising~~ characterizing information features of each information item being used to form a feature vector for each information item, the feature vector being used to map the information item onto a position within the array.

Claim 26 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The method as claimed in Claim 23, further comprising

displaying a representation of at least some of the positions of the array as an n-dimensional display array of display points within a display area on a graphical display.

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The method as claimed in Claim 26, wherein the display area includes at least two areas, one area providing an n-dimensional representation of the first hierarchical level of clusters and the other area providing an n-dimensional representation of the other hierarchical level of clusters.

Claim 28 (Currently Amended): [[A]] The method as claimed in Claim 27, wherein the number of dimensions n is two.

Claims 29-32 (Canceled).

Claim 33 (New): A computer readable medium including computer program instructions which cause a computer to execute a method of retrieving and displaying information, comprising

receiving data representative of a map of information items from a set of information items identified in a search, the map providing the identified information items with respect to positions in an array in accordance with a mutual similarity of the information items, similar information items mapping to similar positions in the array, and

processing the map data to form a hierarchical clustering of information items providing a first clustering level of information items and at least one other clustering level of information items for clusters of information items within the first level clusters,

displaying a representation of at least some of the positions of the array which correspond to identified information items as n-dimensional display array of display points within a display area of a graphical display wherein the displaying comprises

generating data representative of an indication which when displayed on the graphical user interface provides a user when viewing a first cluster in one of the hierarchical levels of a relative direction within the n-dimensional space of the location of another cluster within the hierarchical level, and

displaying the indication of the relative direction of the other cluster within the display area of the graphical display and the data representing the number of information items within the cluster is displayable with respect to the indication.